


# Procedure file

Basic information		
DEC - Discharge procedure	<a href="#">2004/2043(DEC)</a>	Procedure completed
2003 discharge: EC general budget, Court of Justice		
Subject 8.70.03.07 Previous discharges		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur
	<b>CONT</b> Budgetary Control		Appointed 22/09/2004
			PPE-DE <a href="#">STUBB Alexander</a>
	Committee for opinion		Rapporteur for opinion
	<b>AFET</b> Foreign Affairs		Appointed The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>DEVE</b> Development		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>INTA</b> International Trade		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>BUDG</b> Budgets		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>ECON</b> Economic and Monetary Affairs		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>EMPL</b> Employment and Social Affairs		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>ENVI</b> Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>ITRE</b> Industry, Research and Energy		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>IMCO</b> Internal Market and Consumer Protection		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>TRAN</b> Transport and Tourism		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>REGI</b> Regional Development		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>AGRI</b> Agriculture and Rural Development		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>PECH</b> Fisheries		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>CULT</b> Culture and Education		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>JURI</b> Legal Affairs		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>LIBE</b> Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>AFCO</b> Constitutional Affairs		The committee decided not to give an opinion.

	<b>FEMM</b> Women's Rights and Gender Equality	The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	<b>PETI</b> Petitions	The committee decided not to give an opinion.

## Key events

01/06/2004	Non-legislative basic document published	DECHARGEVOLUMEIII/2004	Summary
26/01/2005	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
17/03/2005	Vote in committee		
17/03/2005	Additional information		Summary
22/03/2005	Committee report tabled for plenary	<a href="#">A6-0066/2005</a>	
12/04/2005	Results of vote in Parliament		
12/04/2005	Debate in Parliament		
12/04/2005	Decision by Parliament	<a href="#">T6-0095/2005</a>	Summary
12/04/2005	End of procedure in Parliament		
27/07/2005	Final act published in Official Journal		

## Technical information

Procedure reference	2004/2043(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 100
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

## Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		DECHARGEVOLUMEIII/2004	01/06/2004	EC	Summary
Court of Auditors: opinion, report		C293/2004 <a href="#">OJ C 293 30.11.2004, p. 0001-0328</a>	30/11/2004	CofA	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		<a href="#">A6-0066/2005</a>	22/03/2005	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		<a href="#">T6-0095/2005</a> OJ C 033 09.02.2006, p. 0028-0205 E	12/04/2005	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		<a href="#">SP(2005)2124</a>	19/05/2005	EC	

## Final act

[Budget 2005/533](#)  
[OJ L 196 27.07.2005, p. 0042-0042](#) Summary

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## 2003 discharge: EC general budget, Court of Justice

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**PURPOSE :** to present the revenue and expenditure account and the balance sheet concerning the activities of the budget for the financial year 2003 (Court of Justice).

**CONTENT :** this document sets out the amount of expenditure and the balance sheet for the other institutions of the Union (except the Commission) for the financial year 2003, in particular, the Court of Justice.

The document states that the Court's 2003 budget amounted to EUR 149 598 960 committed to the height of 99.3%, an increase of 3.6% compared to 2002.

It is marked by the following elements

1) staff expenses on active duty : in the framework of pre-accession, the budget authority approved 53 permanent posts for the translation service. However, it was decided to employ the new personnel as auxiliary agents which created a deficit in the posts allocated to auxiliary staff. This sector was also marked by the superfluous expenditure for expatriation for the 53 people (amounts which revealed to be unnecessary because the agents were employed as auxiliary staff and not as statutory staff);

2) reception costs, representation and other associated costs : these costs have decreased in comparison to 2002. Medical infrastructure costs and other costs concerning missions have all been reduced;

3) real estate expenditure : this chapter was subjected to important amendments in comparison with the initial allocation : the indemnities of the leasing option of annexes A, B and C of the Court's Palace have been increased by EUR 774 000 : it concerns a budgetary anticipation policy in which all the surplus appropriations identified at the end of the year were transferred to this post to anticipate the purchasing of these buildings by the Court;

4) costs associated with the organisation of student visits, journalists meetings, etc has risen by 8.1%;

5) expenses of certain institutions and bodies where Title 3 of the Court's budget increases by 37% compared with 2002 to cover the lawyers fees assigned to the institution for free legal assistance.

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## 2003 discharge: EC general budget, Court of Justice

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EP: decision of committee responsible, 1st reading/single reading

The committee adopted the report by Alexander STUBB (EPP-ED, FI) granting discharge to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) for the 2003 financial year. In its accompanying remarks, the committee voiced concern about the lack of suitably experienced staff available to the Court to apply the new provisions of the Financial Regulation and the fact that the internal auditor could not carry out his work programme in 2003 due to a lack of staff. The Court was urged "to remedy this staff shortage without delay and within the assigned budgetary means".

Commenting on the follow-up of the 2002 discharge procedure, MEPs remained alarmed about the growing backlog of cases in 2003, despite a slight improvement indicated for 2004. They welcomed certain improvements, such as the creation of a Civil Service Tribunal (26% of the cases before the Court of First Instance) and the introduction of selective publication of ECJ judgments and orders. The ECJ was urged to set performance targets and establish action plans aimed at reducing the time-span needed to draw pending cases to a close for the years to come.

The committee welcomed the steps taken by the Court on the use of official cars for members, and recognised that "the new provisions are transparent and represent an improvement of the situation". It nevertheless felt that the private use of official cars, which the new provisions still allowed, represented "an undisclosed benefit-in-kind" which was inappropriate.

Lastly, the committee asked the ECJ to evaluate the implications of the new Financial Regulation for its administrative and judicial work in time for its review in 2005/2006.

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## 2003 discharge: EC general budget, Court of Justice

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Alexander STUBB (EPP-ED, FI) granting the Registrar of the Court of Justice discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget for the 2003 financial year. (Please see the summary of 17/03/2005.) The European Court of Justice (ECJ) administered a budget of EUR 150 599 614, of which 99.34 % had been committed and 93.32 % spent by 31 December 2003.

Parliament is concerned about the growing backlog of cases in 2003, although initial indicative figures for 2004 show, with regard to the Court of Justice, a slight improvement. The cases at the Court of Justice mainly concerned environment and consumer law, agriculture, approximation of laws, social policy and taxation. Cases lasted on average two years.

With regard to the Court of First Instance, the main cases covered included actions for annulment, staff cases and intellectual property. Cases lasted on average a year and a half.

Parliament expects the ECJ to set performance targets and to establish action plans to achieve them, with a view to reducing the time span needed to bring pending cases to a conclusion in the years to come.

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## 2003 discharge: EC general budget, Court of Justice

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OBJECTIVE: granting of discharge for implementing the EU's general budget for 2003 ? Court of Justice.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision 2005/533/EC of the European Parliament concerning the discharge for implementing the general budget of the EU for the 2003 financial year (Section IV ? Court of Justice).

CONTENT: With this Decision the European Parliament grants the Registrar of the Court of Justice discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget for the 2003 financial year. It records its comments in the accompanying resolution. (Please refer to the summary of the opinion of 12/04/2005).